

Special Meeting of the Belmont City Council – February 18, 2003

Commission Interviews

Belmont City Hall, 1070 Sixth Avenue, Suite 303

ROLL CALL – 6:30 P.M.

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT: Metropulos, Wright (arr. 7:00), Bauer, Warden

COUNCILMEMBERS ABSENT: None

Staff Present: City Clerk Cook

PUBLIC/COUNCIL COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

Discussion Regarding Interview Process

Councilmember Warden stated he felt continuity on commissions was helpful, but questioned whether Council should keep the youth commissioner on or provide an opportunity for others to participate. Councilmember Metropulos replied that it takes awhile to learn, even as an adult, so you need more than a year.

Interview Candidates for Arts, Parks and Recreation (Adult and Youth), and Planning Commissions

Erica Goodwin (Parks and Recreation Youth), 2408 Casa Bona Avenue, stated she has enjoyed her year on the Commission, and that she has learned how the system worked. She relayed information to friends and sought feedback from them. She felt that she has matured as a result of being on the Commission, that her opinion is accepted more, and she is able to speak more in an adult way. She enjoys seeing other points of view, especially from adults. She has a good understanding of how something simple, such as renovating a playground, can become complicated because of issues like finances and space constraints. She would like to see kids get more involved, would like to have more youth-centered activities, dances, movie night, programs for kids to be involved with seniors, and perhaps a music in the park program for kids to showcase their bands.

Margo Cheechov (Parks and Recreation Adult), 2635 Sequoia Way, stated she likes to be involved in the community. She would like to see something done with Belameda Park, regardless of what happens with the library. She would like to put together a plan for Barrett, and then when money becomes available, it's ready to go. She felt the Commission accomplished a great deal when she was a previous member, such as Alexander Park, the horse ranch, and others. She feels there should be a mix of men and women on the commission for a better balance. She stated she's involved with other groups in Belmont and can bring perspective and ideas from those groups to the Commission.

Christina Wagenseller (Planning), 1913 Arbor Avenue, stated she made a campaign promise the previous November to be involved in the community, and that's why she was applying. She understands the role of the Planning Commission, and has knowledge of zoning, hazardous areas, and land use. She feels that a great architect and engineer can design anything. She has not attended any meetings. Her feelings about variances was that the law is there for a reason, and if asked for a variance she would use the ordinances and building code to make her decision. She felt that people disliked the building process in Belmont and she has a desire to help them. She stated that there are often conflicts between city departments, and that the owner is caught in the middle. She would like to make the process easier. She felt that her youth would be an advantage on the Commission.

Jenna Marks (Parks and Recreation Youth), 2705 Prindle Road, stated her ultimate goal was to run for city council. She also stated that Cipriani needs sidewalks. She would like to see a skate park, but doesn't know where it could go. She likes to debate, and does so often, but doesn't have to win. She stated that initially she might feel intimidated by the adults on the Commission, but would get over it. Through her involvement with STOP (Students Teaching Other Peers) she learned the importance of preparation and organization, and she enjoyed that experience. She is a good listener. She cares about the city and plans to raise her family here.

Jerry Chapman (Planning), 2839 San Juan Boulevard, stated that his goal is to give back to the community after 30 years. He has experience as a builder/developer, and would bring balance to the Commission. He stated he knows how to determine findings. He also stated that he is opposed to the floor area ratio formula as it stands, feels it's too restrictive, that you end up with a building that is not attractive, and it can create dead space that's counted in the FAR. The findings for FAR are straight-forward but there are always issues, and a happy medium can be found. He would like to modify design review, and feels that the commission is burdened by too many reviews. He suggested that design review could be accomplished through a

subcommittee of local neighborhood people, that the County and other cities do this successfully. He feels the existing neighborhood outreach program is good.

Alan Slepoy (Planning), 1809 Bayview Avenue, stated that he is semi-retired and has the time to devote to the Commission. He also stated that he is a mechanical engineer, project manager and plant engineer. He feels that Belmont is the pearl of the Peninsula. He gave some background on his experience on the City Council in Odessa, Ukraine, and that through local control of government funding, they were able to accomplish many things like free transportation and free day care. He was previously involved with the small subdivision on Coronet Boulevard, but got out of that partnership because he felt it was questionable. He can bring experience in management and engineering, can work with people, and is able to tell people no if necessary.

Ann Besser (Arts), 3406 Beresford Avenue, is interested in art and feels it is an integral part of a community. She has taught elementary school and could teach art. She would like to strengthen art opportunities in Belmont, and feels that public displays of art would be beneficial, especially for children. She feels art education is as integral as literature. She has experience with moderating, works well in a group, and stays away from politics. She feels everyone who makes a commitment to a group should attend the meetings. She also feels there is a strong base in Belmont for the arts.

Charles Horton (Planning), 1050 Chula Vista, stated he has lived in Belmont for seven years, like the small town, and that he sees the same people everywhere. He is in the construction trade, and has good perspective, which could be useful to the Commission. He believes in property rights within parameters. He doesn't think there is much of a downtown, that the hills restrict the commercial district. He doesn't understand how most of the HIA got annexed to San Carlos. He makes good and thoughtful decisions. He recognizes that most residential development in Belmont is being accomplished through renovation or tear down/rebuild projects. He would like to see the planning department have more in-house plan-check. He feels the housing stock needs to be redone tastefully, that there is no reason everyone can't do things well. He also feels traffic is Belmont's number one problem.

Rich Bortoli (Parks and Recreation), 1010 Muir Way, enjoys being a member of the Commission, and likes the subcommittee opportunities. One of his goals is to make the playing fields safer, and eliminate gopher holes. He stated the Commission was working on Tree City status for Belmont. He

stated the youth commissioners have appeared to be more comfortable in the last five to six months, but that they were intimidated by the issues, some of which have spanned several years. He feels the biggest youth issue is a skate park, and that the Commission and staff are working with Foster City for their mobile unit. He stated he has a concern regarding funding for the library project, and is worried about eliminating or reducing the park on the site as a means of saving money.

George Kranen (Parks and Recreation), 1902 Notre Dame Avenue, stated he is reapplying because his work isn't done. He has an interest in making the City less reliant on consultants. He would like to structure consultant contracts, such as those with Callendar and Associates, so that a staff member can train with the consultant. There is an additional up-front cost, but the City could save money later when the staff member is able to handle subsequent jobs without using a consultant. Millbrae is doing this successfully, and they spend 40% less than Belmont on similar projects. He would like to see Belmont offer mountain biking classes, and fly casting at Waterdog Lake. When asked about his potential candidacy for the June special election, he stated he probably won't get elected, but wants to use the race for name recognition for the November election. He spoke about the work of the Open Space and Recreation Task Force and is hoping that it will result in a successful bond issue in November.

Matt Wulf (Parks and Recreation Youth), 1816 El Verano, stated he was applying because he felt it was important to get involved and contribute. He spoke about his experiences as an umpire, that it can be controversial, and he learned that you can't make the right decisions all the time. He stated he can handle himself well with adults, and is able to get people to listen to his input. He also stated that San Carlos has a nice Youth Center and he'd like to see Belmont have one, too.

ADJOURNMENT at this time, being 9:20 P.M., this meeting was adjourned to Monday, March 3, 2003, 6:45 P.M., 1070 Sixth Avenue, Conference Room 303 to continue Commission Interviews.

Terri Cook

Belmont City Clerk

Meeting Tape Recorded

Tape No. 547